

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 SS-15 DHA-02 SCS-03
JUSE-00 DEAE-00 SNM-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /082 W
-----310838Z 001685 /23

O 310745Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6571
USMISSION OECD PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1386

S/S FOR PLANTY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC, US, AG
SUBJECT: GOA TO RELEASE AMERICAN PRISONERS

1. MINISTER OF JUSTICE (AND UNTIL RECENTLY SECRETARY
GENERAL AT FOREIGN MINISTRY) BENHABYLES TOOK ME ASIDE
AT HIS RECEPTION 30 MAY TO INFORM ME THAT GOA PLANNED
TO RELEASE SIX AMERICAN DRUG PRISONERS IT HELD AS
"CONCRETE EXAMPLE" OF "EMERGING GOOD RELATIONS" AND
IN ORDER TO "CLEAR THE GROUND" FOR ARRIVAL OF AMBASSADOR
MAOUI IN WASHINGTON AND AMBASSADOR HAYNES HERE. HE
STATED THAT FONMIN BOUTEFLIKA HAD PERSONALLY TAKEN THE
DECISION AFTER CLARK CLIFFORD'S PRIVATE VISIT HERE,
DURING WHICH HE VISITED ONE OF PRISONERS AT LAMBESE.

2. I THANKED MINISTER FOR THIS GESTURE OF GOODWILL
AND ADDED THAT I WAS SURE FAMILIES AND PRISONERS WOULD
ALSO GREATLY APPRECIATE IT. I ASKED IF BENHABYLES'
MENTION OF SIX PRISONERS MEANT THAT CONVICTED
AMERICAN TERRORIST WOULD BE RELEASED AS WELL AS
PRISONERS HELD ON DRUG CHARGES, SINCE WE HAD ONLY
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FIVE AMERICANS IMPRISONED ON DRUG CHARGES.
BENHABYLES APPEARED UNCERTAIN, AND THEN REPLIED
ONLY THOSE IMPRISONED ON DRUG CHARGES WOULD BE
RELEASED, BUT THAT TERRORIST CASE COULD BE DISCUSSED
AGAIN IN NEAR FUTURE. HE ASKED ME TO SEE MOHAMED
ABERKANE, CHIEF OF NORTH AMERICAN AND WESTERN
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AT FONMIN, TO ARRANGE DETAILS.

3. I HAVE APPOINTMENT TO SEE ABERKANE AT 10 AM ON 31 MAY TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF RELEASE. I SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT NOT REPEAT NOT INFORM FAMILIES OF PRISONERS OF GOA ACTION UNTIL I HAVE HAD CHANCE TO OBTAIN FULL STORY FROM ABERKANE. BENHABYLES' UNCERTAINTY AND TURMOIL SURROUNDING GENERAL CLEMENCY EARLIER THIS YEAR RESULTED IN MUCH CONFUSION AND DISAPPOINTMENT FOR PRISONERS AND FAMILIES. IF ALGERIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON INFORMS FAMILIES, AND FAMILIES QUERY DEPT, SUGGEST DEPT RESPOND THAT EMBASSY HAS BEEN INFORMED OF GOA PLANS TO RELESE PRISONERS AND IS SEEKING PRECISE DETAILS. I WILL SUBMIT RESULTS OF MY DISCUSSION WITH ABERKANE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. FOR PARIS: DURING CONVERSATION BENHABYLES STRESS TWICE THAT DECISION TO RELEASE PRISONERS WAS FONMIN BOUTEFLIKA'S PERSONAL DECISION. SUGGEST IT MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE FOR SECRETARY OR OTHER MEMBER OF DELEGATION TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION TO BOUTEFLIKA OR MEMBER OF HIS DELEGATION SHOULD OPPORTUNITY ARISE.LYNE

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition History: n/a
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